



## Basic Bootcamp

### Talking Nationality in Cantonese

2

Traditional	2
Jyutping	2
English	2
Vocabulary	2
Grammar Points	3
Cultural Insight	4

# CantoneseClass101.com

Learn Cantonese with **FREE** Podcasts

## Traditional Chinese

你好。我叫藍蔚。我係中國人。  
你好。我叫Matthew。我係美國人。

## Jyutping

nei5 hou2, ngo5 giu3 laam4 wai3. ngo5 hai6 zung1 gwok3 jan4.  
nei5 hou2, ngo5 giu3 Matthew. ngo5 hai6 mei5 gwok3 jan4.

## English

Hello. I'm Laam Wai. I am Chinese.  
Hello. I'm Matthew. I am American.

## Vocabulary

Traditional	Jyutping	English
美國	mei5 gwok3	America
中國	zung1 gwok3	China
人	jan4	people
叫	giu3	to be called; call
係	hai6	to be
你好	nei5 hou2	hello

## Vocabulary Sample Sentences

你有冇去過美國?	nei5 jau5 mou5 heoi3 gwo3 mei5 gwok3?	Have you been to America?
我從中國嚟。		I come from China.
我哋都係中國人。	ngo5 dei6 dou1 hai6 zung1 gwok3 jan4.	We are all Chinese.
我叫Nicole.	ngo5 giu3 Nicole.	I'm (called) Nicole.
你叫咩名?	nei5 giu3 mel meng2 ?	What's your name?

# CantoneseClass101.com

Learn Cantonese with **FREE** Podcasts

佢係女仔。  
人們在說你好。

keoi5 hai6 nei5 zai2.  
jan4 mun4 zoi6 syut3 nei5  
hou2

She is a girl.  
The people are saying,  
"Hello."

## Grammar Points

---

The Focus of This Lesson is Talking about Your Ethnicity

我係美国人。

ngo5 hei6 mei5 gwok3 jan4.

"I am American."

---

To express the idea of nationality in Cantonese, simply add the word 人 jan4 ("person") to the end of the name of a country.

For Example:

1. 美國  
mei5 gwok3  
"America"
2. 美国人  
mei5 gwok3 jan4  
"American"

In Chinese, some country names consist of a descriptive character or phonetic character followed by the character for "country" or "nation" (國, gwok3). This is the case as in our example for America above. Other country names which follow this pattern are:

1. 英國  
jing1 gwok3  
"England"
2. 中國  
zung1 gwok3  
"China"
3. 德國  
dak1 gwok3  
"Germany"
4. 法國  
faat3 gwok3  
"France"

Unfortunately, the names of many other countries are harder to memorize, since

# CantoneseClass101.com

Learn Cantonese with **FREE** Podcasts

they have come into Chinese through a process of transliteration. There is often no rhyme nor reason to generating these names, although many use a subset of particular Chinese characters that are used more or less exclusively in phonetic loan words.

1. 加拿大  
gaal naa4 daai6  
"Canada"
2. 墨西哥  
mak6 sail gol  
"Mexico"
3. 意大利  
ji3 daai6 lei6  
"Italy"

## Cultural Insight

---

### [Hong Kong People](#)

---

Introducing yourself in Cantonese differs somewhat from introducing yourself in English. In English, people from Hong Kong refer to themselves as "Hong Kongers", just as people from New York refer to themselves as "New Yorkers." In Cantonese, the system for describing where people are from is to put the character for person (人) after the name of the place from where they come. People in Hong Kong thus refer to themselves as 香港人 (hoeng1 gong2 jan4), while people in Guangzhou refer to themselves as a 廣州人 gwong2 zaul jan4.